



Hardships in the Path of Seeking Knowledge

By Syed Ahaz B. Atif (Takhassus)

As you wake up to the shouts of the *nigrans* (supervisors) and immediately perceive the cold biting your bones; as you struggle to remove your thick, warm blankets and contemplate staying in bed instead; as you feel your body parts freeze after making *istinja*; as you see the vapor rise from your arms while making wudu; as you feel your body shiver and your teeth chatter after taking a shower, as you wear your leather socks for the hundredth time; as you put on layers upon layers of sweaters, jackets, and coats; as you try to warm your hands with your cold breath to no avail; as you put on lotion to save your skin from blistering and cracking; as you try cover your face from the icy, biting wind—remember the words of Allah Ta'ala: **واصبر فإن الله لا يضيع أجر**

(المحسينين) “And be patient, for Allah does not let the reward of the righteous go to waste.” (Hud: 115). For every big and small hardship and difficulty we bear in this frigid winter, there is a guaranteed unmeasurable reward in store for us in the Hereafter, as we are bearing this in the path of Allah—the path of seeking knowledge for His sake.

Imam Yahya bin Abi Kathir is famously quoted as saying, **“لا يستطاع العلم براحة الجسم”** (Knowledge is not possible with bodily comforts.) which means that in the path of seeking knowledge, one is bound to face all kinds of discomforts. This is because knowledge is not something cheap—it requires sacrificing the most valuable things one has:

one's time, one's wealth, one's enjoyments, and one's comforts.

Unlike the students of the past, we do not need to traverse long distances to acquire knowledge—the longest distance we take is from boarding to the classroom. Unlike the students of the past, we do not need to seek out the most knowledgeable scholars in the most remote areas—the best of scholars are present around us. Unlike the students of the past, we do not need to study for decades upon decades—our course is set for seven years. Unlike the students of the past, we do not need to copy our books by hand or search for a copy for days on end—our books are available in abundance. Unlike the students of the past, we do not need sit outside in the sweltering heat or in the blistering cold—we sit in sheltered classrooms with fans and heaters. Unlike the students of the past, we do not need to earn for food, or ask others to feed us, or suffice on any simple food we can find—we are provided delicious, warm food

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three times a day.

In reality, we are studying in extreme luxury as compared to the students of the past, and whatever hardships we are facing now will only last a few months at most. For this we should be extremely grateful to Allah Ta'ala—not only through our words but also through our actions, which is that we use these favors of His in the correct manner by applying ourselves wholeheartedly to the pursuit of the knowledge of His Deen.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us patience, may He increase us in beneficial knowledge, and may He reward us abundantly in the Hereafter. Ameen.

Hajj Without a Visa

By Ahmadullah Sardar (3rd Year)

Hajj is a pillar of Islam and amongst the most virtuous of deeds in Islam. However, not everyone can afford it. Therefore, Allah Ta'ala has taught us through Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) a few acts that if we perform, we can gain the reward of performing Hajj.

So while the Hujjaj depart for Hajj, those of us who have been left behind can practice upon the following actions to gain the same reward as our chosen brethren:

1. Wudu at home before proceeding for salah with jamaat.

Sayyiduna Abu Umamah (radiyallahu'anhu) reports that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "One who purifies himself (i.e. makes wudu) and leaves his home to attend the Fard salah in congregation receives the reward of a Haji in the state of Ihram, and if

he leaves for the Dhuha salah (Chasht) he gets the reward of 'Umrah... (Sunan Abu Dawud, Hadith: 559)

2. Ishraq Salah.

Sayyiduna Anas Ibn Malik (radiyallahu 'anhu) reports that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "Whoever offers his Fajr salah in congregation, and then remains seated making the dhikr (remembrance) of Allah until (approximately 15 mins after) sunrise after which he offers two rak'ats of salah (Ishraq), he will receive the reward of one complete Hajj and one complete 'Umrah".

(Sunan Tirmidhi, Hadith: 586 with a sound chain)

N.B. Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) repeated the words: "complete" thrice.

3. Going to the masjid to acquire or impart knowledge.

Sayyiduna Abu Umamah (radiyallahu'anhu) reports that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "Whoever goes to the masjid for the purpose of learning or teaching knowledge receives the reward of a Haji whose Hajj was perfect.".

(Tabarani, Hadith: 7473 with a sound chain.)

4. Umrah in Ramadan.

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "Umrah in Ramadan equals the reward of Hajj performed with me". (Sahih Muslim, Hadith: 1256)

5. To recite "Subhanallah" 100 times in the morning and evening.

Sayyiduna 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr (radiyallahu 'anhuma) reported that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "He who recites Subhanallah 100 times in the morning and another 100 times in the

evening is like one who performed Hajj 100 times!" (Sunan Tirmidhi, Hadith: 3471 with a sound chain)

6. Serving one's parents:

Sayyiduna Anas (radiyallahu'anhu) reports that a man came to Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and said: "I wish to participate in jihad, but I cannot afford it". Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) enquired if any of his parents were alive, to which he said: "Yes! My mother is alive". Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "Show Allah how you serve her. If you do so (duly) you will be like a: Haji, a Mu'tamir (one doing 'Umrah) and a Mujaahid (one striving in Allah's way)."

(Abu Ya'la, Hadith: 2760, and Tabarani with good chains)

7. Attending the Jumu'ah Salah.

Sa'id ibn Musayyab (rahimahullah) said: "Attending Jumu'ah is better according to me than a nafl (voluntary) Hajj".

8. Attending the Eid Salah.

Some of the Sahabah (radiyallahu'anhum) have said: "Attending the Eidul Fitr salah equals the reward of 'Umrah, and the Eidul Adha Salah equals that of Hajj".

9. Esha Salah in Congregation.

A tabi'ee, Uqbah ibn 'Abdil Ghafir (rahimahullah) said: "Offering the 'Isha Salah in congregation equals the reward of Hajj, and Fajr in congregation equals 'Umrah".

10. Fulfilling the need of a fellow Muslim.

Hasan Al-Basri (rahimahullah) said: "Your proceeding to fulfil the need a fellow Muslim is better for you than one Hajj after another!" (Quoted By Zabeedi (rahimahullah) in Sharhul Ihyaa, vol.6 pg.292)

11. Abstinence from the haram (forbidden) acts.

Some of the pious predecessors said: "To abstain from an iota of wrong is better than five hundred (nafl) Hajj".

Fudhail ibn 'Iyadh (rahimahullah)–the great sage of his age–said: "There is no Hajj or jihad that is more important than protecting one's tongue" i.e., against sin".

12. Any act of Good during the first 10 days of Dhul Hijjah.

13. Spending on a student of Islamic knowledge.

Once a father came to Muhammad ibn Sahnun (rahimahullah) and said: "I will earn by myself, and I will not distract my son from his studies. Ibn Sahnun replied: "Do you know that your reward for doing so will be greater than that of (nafl) Hajj, and jihad!" (Ma'alim Irshadiyyah of Shaykh Muhammad 'Awwamah, pg.35).

The purpose here is not to discourage anyone from the actual Hajj. (That is why this is being circulated now, when the Hajis have already begun to depart.) Like they say: "There's nothing like the real thing."

Allah Ta'ala knows best, and may He grant us all the tawfeeq (ability) to practice on the above, as well as afford us the opportunity to perform real Hajj. Ameen

Intention

By Hamzah Qadi (2nd Year)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على أشرف الأنبياء والمرسلين سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه أجمعين

Nowadays the conduct of students from universities and colleges are rubbing off onto the students in the madrasahs, resulting in immense problems. Asaatiza and those in the administration are thus faced with difficulties everyday. Hazrat Mawlana Siddiq Ahmad Bandwi (رحمه الله) has written a book by the name of "Etiquettes for Students". In this book he has highlighted a few etiquettes to adhere to. Some of them are as follows:

First Etiquette:

A student should always renew his intention and he should ensure that he has no corrupt intention or any worldly motive when he is acquiring knowledge. He should acquire knowledge with sincerity for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala and to secure his Hereafter. Rasulullah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) has explained that every action is based on one's intention. If a person performs an action with a good intention solely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala then only will he receive the reward for the action. If there is any worldly motive then for such a person there is no reward by Allah Ta'ala.

Second Etiquette: Refraining from Evil

Every student should purify his nafs of bad habits and evil qualities. A hadith narrated in Ta'leemul Muta allim states that Rasulullah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) explained that a person who does not refrain from sins during his student days Allah Ta'ala will involve him in one of three things. Either he will die in his youth, or despite his capability and academic achievements he will go to such places

where his knowledge will be destroyed and he will not be able to spread his knowledge, or he will suffer disgrace in the service of a king or some wealthy person. If a student of Deen keeps away from sins people will benefit from his knowledge and the sources of knowledge will open up for him. Shaykh Saadi (رحمه الله) has stated: No matter how much of knowledge you attain, if there is no amal (practice) then this is ignorance. One cannot be a researcher nor an intelligent person. Rather he is like an animal with books loaded on him.

Third Etiquette: Respect for Asaatiza

We as students should regard the respect of our teachers as incumbent upon us. Hadhrat Abu Saeed Khudri (رضي الله عنه) narrates that Rasulullah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: "Seek knowledge with determination and dignity be humble and submissive to those from whom you acquire knowledge."

Fourth etiquette: Serving one's Asaatiza

We as student should regard the service of our asaatzia as a means of success in both the worlds. We as students must not wait for our ustaadh to tell us to make khidmat for them.

Fifth Etiquette: Respect for the books of Deen

Similar to respecting our asaatzia, it is necessary for us to show respect for the books of Deen. For example, we shouldn't touch any book without wudhu or stretch our feet towards the books and so on.

With regards to seeking knowledge Imam Shafiee (رحمه الله) says it very beautifully in his poem:

لَا يُدْرِكُ الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ عُمُرُهُ يَكْدَحُ فِي مَصْلَحَةِ الْأَهْلِ

That person cannot acquire wisdom whose life [is spent] toiling for the welfare of his family.

وَلَا يَتَأَلَّمُ الْعِلْمَ إِلَّا فَتًى خَالٍ مِنَ الْأَفْكَارِ وَالشُّغْلِ

Only a young man free of thoughts and preoccupations can acquire knowledge.

لَوْ أَنَّ لُقْمَانَ الْحَكِيمَ الَّذِي سَارَتْ بِهِ الرُّكْبَانُ بِالْفَضْلِ

If Luqman the wise, whose virtue has spread far and wide,

يُلَيِّ بِفَقْرٍ وَعِيَالٍ لَمَّا قَرَّقَ بَيْنَ التَّيْنِ وَالْبَقْلِ

Had been tested with poverty and a [earning for] a family, he would not even be able to differentiate between grass and vegetables

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the correct understanding of Deen and the ability to practice it and to pass it onto others. Ameen.

Sincerity

By Jareer Zakariyya (4th Year)

IMPORTANTCE OF INTENTION IN SEEKING KNOWLEDGE

Sincerity in seeking knowledge is a condition that is continuous and not just preliminary.

What this means is that the student of knowledge should continuously strive to implement the quality of sincerity within himself, and that he should not refrain from his studies due to the thought that he was insincere.

Some scholars have provided the following definition for sincerity (ikhlaas):

Ibn Jamaa'ah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "It means that one has a good intention when seeking knowledge by intending through his studies to please Allah; to act in accordance with what he learns; to revive the Shariah; to illuminate his heart; to elucidate its (i.e. knowledge's) hidden meanings; to gain nearness to Allah on the Day of Judgment; and to present oneself to what Allah has promised for those who possess it i.e.

His Pleasure and great virtue."

Sufyaan Thawri (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"I did not try to rectify anything that was more difficult upon me than my intention."

One should not intend, by one's search for knowledge, to fulfil some worldly goal such as assuming leadership, gaining status and wealth, competing with colleagues, having people extol him, taking the front seat in a gathering, and so on, since he will be exchanging that which is better for that which is lower.

Abu Yusuf (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"Intend Allah through your (search for) knowledge, for indeed I never sat in a gathering of people in which I made it my intention to humble myself except that I didn't leave from it until I had surpassed them. And I never sat in a gathering of people in which I made it my intention to surpass them, except that I didn't leave from it until I was disgraced.

Knowledge is one of the many acts of worship and one of the many ways of gaining nearness to Allah. So if one purifies his intention while seeking it, his deed will be accepted and purified and its blessing will become complete. However, if he intends other than the sake of Allah when seeking knowledge, his deed becomes nullified and wasted and his transaction is lost. Perhaps he may even miss out on these (worldly) objectives and never achieve any of them. So in this case, he will have failed in his objective and at the same time wasted his efforts." [1]

This principle entails several matters, the most important of which is:

The Devil enters into the hearts of some people desiring to turn them away from knowledge based on the argument that one should leave off seeking knowledge until he first purifies his intention. This is a plot, scheme and deception of the Devil. Rather, it is upon a Muslim to continue and persevere in his search for knowledge, and to constantly re-evaluate his intention, as Sufyaan Thawri said: "I did not try to rectify anything that was more difficult upon me than my intention."

And this is Sufyaan we are talking about, so it applies even more so for those other than him! Therefore, one should not make this into something that diverts him away from seeking knowledge.

When Hisham Dastawa'i (may Allah have mercy on him) said; "By Allah, I cannot (honestly) say that I ever went out one day to seek hadith for the sake of Allah." Imam Dhabbi (may Allah have mercy on him) commented on this saying: "By Allah, me either!"

The Salaf would seek knowledge for the sake of Allah, and so they became dignified and went on to become Imams that were followed and looked up to by the people. And there were other people from among them who did not seek knowledge for the sake of Allah at first, but yet they still attained the knowledge, then they woke up and examined themselves. And so the knowledge led them to have sincerity while on their path (of seeking knowledge). This becomes clearer in what was stated by Mujahid and others: "We sought this knowledge while not having a big intention concerning it. Then Allah granted us the intention (for it) afterward."

Others would say: "We sought this knowledge for other than the sake of Allah but the

knowledge refused that it should be sought except for the sake of Allah." So this is also good. Then, afterwards, they went on to spread the knowledge with righteous intentions.

And there were other people that sought knowledge with corrupt intentions – for the sake of the worldly life and so that they could be praised by the people. So they got what they intended.

The Prophet (Sall Allaahu alaihi wa Sallam) said: "Whoever fights in battle with the intention of (getting) war booty, he will get what he intends."

You will find this type of people not being illuminated by the light of knowledge. The knowledge has no impact on their souls nor does it produce a noticeable result in their actions. Rather, the one with knowledge is only he who fears Allah.

Then there were other people that attained knowledge and achieved positions due to it, but they oppressed people and abandoned the requisites of knowledge, thus embarking on committing major sins and lewd acts! So woe be to them – these people are not scholars.

Some other people do not fear Allah with regards to their knowledge, but rather engage in schemes, issuing verdicts permitting prohibited matters and reporting inauthentic and irregular narrations.

Other people show audacity before Allah and fabricate ahadith, so Allah exposed them and their knowledge left them. So their preparation became only for the Hellfire.

All of these types of people took in a large portion of knowledge, and they excelled in it, in the general sense. Then they were suc-

ceeded by later generations that had deficiency in knowledge and action. Then there followed a people after that who ascribed themselves to knowledge outwardly but were not well-versed in it, with the exception of a few among them who thought that because of that they had become noble scholars. However, it did not cross their minds that they were gaining nearness to Allah through it.

The reason for this is because they did not experience any teacher that was taken as a role model with regard to knowledge. So they became like savage barbarians. The biggest aim of one of their teachers was to obtain and amass costly books which they could look into on any given day. So they would misinterpret what was stated therein and not agree with it. We ask Allah for salvation and pardon.

Some of them have stated: "I am not a scholar, nor have I seen a scholar." [2]

This third foundation is from amongst the important principles – and it is that a student strives to make his intention purely for the sake of Allah when seeking knowledge. Achieving sincerity is something necessary. Allah Ta'ala says:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ

"And they were only commanded to worship Allah sincerely, making the worship purely for His sake." [Surah Al-Bayyinah: 5]

As mentioned before, seeking the religious knowledge that is required in order to properly worship Allah is itself an act of worship and part of the implementation of Laa Ilaaha Illaa Allah. So in summary, seeking knowledge is an act of worship that one must strive to have sincerity in whilst performing it. The Messenger of Allah (Sall Allaahu alaihi wa Sallam) said: "Verily, actions are based on

intentions. And verily, every man will have what he intends." [3]

Based on this, I say: A student of knowledge must continuously strive to correct his intention and to make it purely for the sake of Allah.

Someone may say: "Does this mean that I should not seek knowledge until I (first) correct my intention?"

I say, "No. Rather, you should seek knowledge. But while you are seeking knowledge, you should examine yourself and rectify yourself by way of correcting your intention."

If this person continues, saying: "I want to leave off seeking knowledge until I first correct my intention!"

I will reply by saying: "This is a trap from the Devil."

[1]Tadhkirat-us-Saami' wal-Mutakallim (pg.69 -70)

[2]SiyarA'laaman-Nubalaa(7/152-153)

[3] Al-Bukhari reported this hadith in his Sahih: Book of the Beginning of Revelation (no. 1) on the authority of Umar bin Al-Khattab (radhi Allahu anhu) and Muslim in his Sahih: Book of Leadership (no. 1907)

Adopting the Company of The Pious

By Mus'ab Mohamed Bamath (2nd Year)

Allah Ta'ala says in the Quran: "O you who believe fear Allah and be with those who are truthful." (Surah Tawbah: 119) In the tafsir Ma'ariful Quraan, it is mentioned that whenever Allah Ta'ala commands to adopt taqwa Allah Ta'ala refers to attaining taqwa. Remaining in the company of the pious is a great way of attaining taqwa. It is mentioned in the Hadith: Abu Musa (رضي الله عنه) narrated that Nabi (صلي الله عليه وسلم) said: "The example of a good companion (who sits with you) in comparison with a bad one is like that of the musk seller and the blacksmiths bellows (or furnace). From the first you would either buy musk or enjoy its good smell while the bellows would either burn your clothes or your house or you get a bad nasty smell thereof." (Sahih Al-Bukhari) Company has a great effect on our beliefs and our actions. When you are in the company of someone, you automatically start doing or saying things they do or say. Therefore if you adopt good company you will start doing good and if you adopt bad company you will start doing evil.

The dog that was with the companions of the cave, because of sharing the company of the righteous, it will enter into Jannah. Being in the company of the pious is like entering a perfume shop—when leaving you will have some of the fragrance on you whether you bought anything or not. Similarly, being in the company of the pious—when leaving you surely leave with something good. Just by being in the company of the pious it will have a great effect on you. The Sahaba (رضي الله

عنهم) became sahaba because of being in the company of Nabi (صلي الله عليه وسلم). We still have great pious people alive—spend as much of your time in their company while you still have an opportunity. Those who don't have access to the pious should read books written by the pious or about the pious and it will have a similar effect like being in their company. Speaking about the pious draws the mercy of Allah Ta'ala. May Allah Ta'la bless us with the company of the pious.

Sincerity of Intention

By Umar Sabir (3rd Year)

The first thing a person must start with before seeking knowledge is to correct his intention. The intention of a student should be only for the pleasure of Allah. The foundation for all work is the intention for that work. If there is a problem with the foundation then they will be a problem with other things as well.

In one hadith which is mentioned in Bukhari and Muslim: Nabi (صلي الله عليه وسلم) said :

إنما الأعمال بنية وإنما لكل امرئ ما نوى: فمن كانت هجرته إلى الله ورسوله فهجرته إلى الله ورسوله ومن كان هجرته لدا يصيبها أو امرأة ينجسها فهجرته إلى ما هاجر إليه

The translation of the hadith is:

"Actions are judged according to their intentions and a person will get that for what for what he made an intention, therefore whoever migrated for the pleasure of Allah and His Messenger then his migration is for Allah and His Messenger, and whoever migrated to gain the pleasure of this world or to get married to a certain woman, then his migration will be

for that thing for which he migrated.”

We learn from the above hadith that to migrate for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala is such an important action but by having the wrong intention then they will be no benefit in the Hereafter.

There is another hadith in which it is mentioned that a scholar, a generous person and a martyr will be flung into the fire of Jahan-nam because of not having the correct intention. Some of the pious say that a person who gains knowledge for the pleasure of Allah, He will always be helped by Allah.

Furthermore a person who seeks knowledge for anyone besides Allah he will be disgraced.

Hadhrat Sufyaan Thawri (R.A.) said: “He never had to be more particular about his intention.”

A person should try and check his intention daily.

If a person's intention is correct, then Allah will help him achieve his goal.

Sunnahs of Eid ul Adha

By Mas'ud Gazi (3rd Year)

- To wake up as early as possible.
- To take a bath and wear the best of clothes.
- To use different routes to go and come from the Eid gaah.
- To recite the Takbeer loudly when going to the Eid gaah.
- To slaughter the animal early after the Eid salah.

- To eat some part of the animal before eating anything else.
- To recite the Takbirat from the 9th of Dhul Hijjah after Fajr till the 13th of Dhul Hijjah after Asr.

Conditions that Necessitate Eid Salah:

- To be a resident (muqim).
- To be a male.
- To be a free.
- To be healthy (be free from any defect).

The Method of Performing Eid Salah:

- Make intention for Eid salah with 6 extra takbirs.
- The imam will say Allahu Akbar and read thana. Then he will say 3 extra takbirs loudly whilst raising his hands and leaving them on the side.
- Then continue with the salah with surah Fatihah and another Surah.
- In the second rakah the Imam will first read Surah Fatiha and another Surah, then he will say the 3 extra wajib Takbirs. Here again the hands should be raised and left on the side.
- The salah will then continue as normal.
- Thereafter, a khutbah will take place. It is wajib to listen to the khutbah.